ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a process for simply producing an optically active 2-thiomethyl-3-phenylpropionic acid derivative useful as an intermediate for medicines from inexpensive raw materials. An optically active 2-hydroxymethyl-3-phenylpropionic acid ester derivative which can be relatively easily obtained by asymmetric reduction reaction with an enzyme is cyclized to an optically active β-lactone derivative which is then reacted with a sulfur compound to produce an optically active 2-thiomethyl-3-phenylpropionic acid derivative in high yield.